

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE LA SALLE CITY COUNCIL  
June 29, 2020**

**A regular meeting of the La Salle City Council of La Salle, Illinois was held Monday, June 29, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Jeff Grove presiding with proper notices being duly and continuously posted.**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

**Present-** Aldermen Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

**Excused Absence:** None

A quorum was present.

A moment of silence was held in memory of Virgil Cioni a dedicated La Salle resident and friend to many, as well as a La Salle Township official for many years.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept and place on file the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City Council held June 15, 2020. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

**PRESENTATION**

Fire Chief Andy Bacidore presented Mike Perez a plaque recognizing his retirement after 28 years of service as a volunteer fireman with the La Salle Fire Department. Chief Bacidore said Mike's retirement was bittersweet, as the department is losing another quality firefighter yet Bacidore said the sweet part is that Mike can have more time with his family. Chief Bacidore said that Mike was instrumental in promoting fire safety and fire prevention and was involved in many aspects of the department during his 28 years of service. Bacidore described his service as a "family affair" as Mike's father also served as a firefighter for many years in Peru. Chief Bacidore recalled how Mike and his father would bring in tacos once a year for training nights at the department. Andy referred to Mike as a great friend who had always been there for him.

Mr. Perez thanked the Mayor for recognizing his service and Chief Bacidore for 28 years of support. He said he also appreciated the support from Andy's dad who previously served as Fire Chief in La Salle. He thanked Chief Uranich and the City Council for their support over the years and for the well wishes on his retirement. Mr. Perez thanked his fellow firemen buddies, EMTs, and paramedics and encouraged them to keep up the good work. Mr. Perez then thanked his wife and children, as well as his training officer, Jerry Janick. He said Jerry has done a good job over the years and he learned a lot from him.

Mayor Grove thanked Mr. Perez for the sacrifices he has made, as well as those made by his family. Mayor explained that as a volunteer fireman, there can be times when volunteers are called out after already putting in a long day at their full-time jobs. Mayor Grove said that the department always knew they could count on him. Mayor Grove stated that he has always found Mike to be very personable and a great representative of the City of La Salle.

All present gave Mr. Perez a standing ovation and a round of applause.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to go out of order of the published agenda and move resignations and appointments up.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Mayor Grove stated that after 31 years of service and professionalism, Police Chief Rob Uranich notified him that he will be retiring as of July 15, 2020. Mayor Grove stated that Rob was promoted to the role of Chief during the Mayor's time as an alderman. He described Rob as someone who is very cut and dry who is focused on getting the job done, with no pre-determined agendas. Mayor said that Rob has never been one who sought praise or glory. Instead, he chose a more subtle role behind the scenes, preferring not to be the one in front of the cameras. Mayor said Rob has always served in roles where he could be a mentor or coach.

Mayor Grove told a story of a landlord in town whose son was continually getting into trouble. The landlord told the Chief that his son was moving out of town so should no longer pose a problem to the City. Three months later, the young man was arrested once again in the City at the same address. When Chief questioned the father as to why the son was back in town, he explained that Chief Uranich's department and officers were the only ones who would address his son's issues head on and hold him accountable, in hopes he would change his ways for the better. Mayor Grove always thought that was a great compliment to the Chief and his department.

Mayor continued by saying that Rob always made sure his department had the equipment they needed so his team was safe and he always made security a priority.

Lastly, Mayor Grove thanked Rob for the way he served the City, but also thanked him as a friend. Mayor Grove continued by saying that the number of people in attendance this evening was certainly a reflection of the great job he has done.

Alderman Herndon said that Mayor Washkowiak in 2009 made a great decision by promoting Rob to Chief. Herndon said Rob is very professional and that he has never met a more outstanding man in his life. He said that Rob is as good as you get. Chief Uranich joked by saying that in full disclosure, he and Alderman Herndon played little league together.

Mayor Grove said that the nice thing about our area is that many times if there is a case in a different community, departments work together. Mayor said that in situations where our department or detectives played a role and were recognized for their efforts, Chief Uranich always made sure he passed that praise on to his department. Mayor said the entire department operates with that mentality, which is that it is not about praise or recognition, but about getting the job done. Mayor said that in his eyes this speaks to the integrity of the Chief and our officers. Mayor Grove continued by assuring the officers that were present in the Council Chambers that with everything going on in the world, they have the full support of this Council.

Mayor Grove then referenced a scene in the the 1980's Chuck Norris movie *Delta Force* where hostages that were saved are shown unloading from a plane and happily reuniting with their families. Then another part in the final scene shows the Delta Force leaving, carrying one of their own. They do this quietly with no fanfare. He said that is how he thinks of Rob and this police department, as they do a heck of a job and do not expect praise or accolades. Mayor

thanked Rob for setting a great example and wished him and his family well. Those present gave Chief Uranich a standing ovation and round of applause.

Rob thanked Grove which thanked the City Council. He said there may have been some small disagreements along the way, but everyone always had the best interest of the City at heart. He said he has enjoyed working with everyone in the department and thanked the men who taught him how to do his job over the course of his career. He said without them he would not be where he is today, so it was important to remember those men. He said the job his officers do is incredible and he hopes everyone appreciates them because it appears things are going to be a bit more difficult. He thanked Mike Smudzinski who he has worked with the longest and relied on the most. He said it takes a team and all must work together to be successful. He said that he was certain that would continue moving forward. Lastly, Rob thanked his wife and children who, without them, he explained, could not have bore the burden of the job. He said he tried not to bring work home or talk about work, but at times you cannot help it. Rob thanked his wife for the stress she has been through and the times his children may have wondered why their dad was a little quiet. He said above all others, without their support he could not have made it. He said he was very proud of his children as during his time as Chief they have grown into great young adults.

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to accept the resignation with regret of Rob Uranich as Chief of Police effective July 15, 2020. Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None Absent: None Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 8-0**

**Resignation: Robert Uranich as Police Chief effective 7-15-2020.**

Mayor Grove then announced that he would like to put the name of Mike Smudzinski before the council for consideration to assume the role of Police Chief in the City of La Salle effective July 16, 2020.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept the Mayor's recommendation to appoint Mike Smudzinski as Police Chief in the City of La Salle effective July 16, 2020.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None Absent: None Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 8-0**

**Appointment: Mike Smudzinski as Police Chief effective 7-16-2020.**

Mayor Grove stated that when he received Chief Uranich's resignation letter, he sought input from him and he resoundingly recommended Mike for the job. The Mayor said he had no doubt in his mind either and knew Mike would be the man for this job. Mayor Grove said he, along with Rob Uranich and Boo Herndon, have known Mike since childhood and recalled how they all got the chance to represent La Salle in the 13 year old Junior League All-Stars in Mundelein years ago. Mayor said even at that time he saw Mike's leadership abilities and he has seen it in his career as well. Mayor said as with Chief Uranich, there is a common theme here in La Salle

of family, coaching, and leadership. Mayor said Mike's family has and will always be his priority. Mayor Grove said there is not a sport out there where Mike is not coaching his daughters. Mayor said he believes the department will be open to Mike's leadership style. He expects that he will be one to ask a lot of questions and have a desire to learn.

Mayor Grove ended by saying that the council appreciates Mike's willingness to take on the role as our new Police Chief and wished him well. Mayor said Mike will be sworn in at the July 13, 2020 meeting.

Mike Smudzinski thanked the Mayor for the opportunity and for placing trust and confidence in him. He said when he received the call, he was shocked. He thanked the council for instilling confidence in him. He said it is uncharted waters for him and he knows he has big shoes to fill, but he knows he has a good department behind him and he will do his best to learn quickly. He compared the feeling today to the feeling he had when he got the job as investigator. It was uncharted water then as well, but he worked hard just as he will work hard in this role. Mike then recognized his wife and two daughters who he described as "his life." He, too, said he could not do this without them. There are times where it is very tough because of work and they tolerate it. He said he is a very lucky guy and he is looking forward to the next part of his journey. He said right now these are difficult times, but said another police officer recently explained to him that law enforcement is like a pendulum. Some day it swings to the bad side and other days it swings to the good side. Mike said with the people he works with, he anticipates good things. Mike thanked everyone and promised he will do his best.

Mayor Grove said we have the confidence in him and that we are all one team and we work together. We may have differences, but in the end you don't mess with the home team. He hopes that he will do what Rob did and train someone in the department who can move through the ranks and someday replace him. He said it is always good to be able to hire people in-house.

Moved by Alderman Herndon and seconded by Alderman Crane to grant the request of Ameren Illinois to break ground at 383 Ator Avenue to install gas service and at 387 Ator Avenue to install gas and electric service. Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane  
NAY: None Absent: None Abstain: Alderman Lavieri

**Motion Carried 7-0**

Moved by Alderman Crane and seconded by Alderman Herndon to grant the request from Shane Lampley to break ground for driveway for premises located at 1415 Porter Avenue. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Demes to grant the request of Joe Edgcomb on behalf of the St. Jude Run to hold a Tag Day collection at the intersection of 11<sup>th</sup> and Bucklin and at Casey's on July 18, 2020. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to grant the request from Lisa Furleigh on behalf of Quilting in the Valley for a Redevelopment Incentive Program grant totaling \$12,500 for premises located at 838 First Street. Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None Absent: None Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 8-0**

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Reynolds to grant the request of Starved Rock Runners, Ltd. to conduct the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual "Boo" Milby Alzheimer's 5K in the City of La Salle on August 15, 2020 beginning at Northwest School and going through Trovero Subdivision. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

In regard to the next request on the agenda, Mayor Grove explained that our current ordinance does not allow flea markets per se. He explained that this ordinance was written to prevent on-going garage sales. Therefore they are limited to three per year. However, Mayor Grove said he has seen the plan and is confident Mr. Witek's plan will be done in a professional manner. Mr. Ron Witek was present. Mayor Grove asked if Mr. Witek would agree to operating the flea market on a trial basis. Mr. Witek stated that he was fine with that. It was agreed the Flea and Farmer's Market would be authorized through the end of September.

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Demes to grant the request Breckle, Inc. (Ron, Brett and Kyle Witek) for a waiver and variance to city ordinance in order to operate a Flea & Farmers Market at 2405 St. Vincent's Avenue on Saturdays and Sundays on a trial basis from July to the end of September. Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None Absent: None Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 8-0**

In regard to the request to lease City right-of way, Mr. Scott Clark was present to further explain his request to lease a portion of city property for the purpose of having outdoor dining. Mr. Clark said the seating will be on the south side of his building and on the west side. He explained that the fencing surrounding the area will not be permanent. Mayor Grove said his only concern is that he is the first to have outdoor seating in a residential area. Mayor asked if there was anyway this could be done on the east side of the building. Mr. Clark said what they have set up now on the east side of the building takes up too much of their parking lot. He assured the Mayor that no one will be outside after 10:30 p.m. The council thanked Mr. Clark for being present to answer questions. It was agreed to authorize the lease on a trial basis through late September, early October.

Moved by Alderman Demes and seconded by Alderman Bacidore to grant the request from Scott Clark president of Jake's 201, Inc. d/b/a Jake's Pour House to lease a 15' x 31' portion of city property at Jake's Pour House (201 Ninth Street) to be used for outdoor dining on a trial basis through October 2020. Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None Absent: None Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 8-0**

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS**

Moved by Alderman Lavieri and seconded by Alderman Jeppson to accept and place on file the Monthly Police Income Report for May 2020 showing total fees collected of \$4,982.88. Each and every alderman has a copy.

Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee to deny the request from La Salle-Peru High School for a monetary donation to support a low to no-cost prom for graduating seniors on Saturday, July 11, 2020 in order to remain consistent with current donating practices. Each and every alderman has a copy.

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None Absent: None Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 8-0**

**OLD BUSINESS**

No new business was brought forth.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Alderman Reynolds stated that he received a request from residents who reside on Canal Street for a stop sign at Crosat and Canal Streets in an effort to slow eastbound traffic between Route 351 and Union Street.

**The request was referred to the Streets, Alleys, and Traffic Committee. Chairman Bacidore announced the request will be considered by the committee on July 13, 2020 immediately following the 6 p.m. Finance Meeting.**

Mayor Grove and Lynda Kasik updated the council on the pool which recently opened as part of the Phase 4 recovery. They explained that the pool is now open for two sessions. The first session is from 12:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. with a second session between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. daily. A total of 200 guests during each session are allowed. Temperatures of those entering the pool and life guards are taken and cleaning is done between each session.

Leah Inman said that a kick-off meeting with Farmer's Market vendors was held. The market will open Tuesday, July 7, 2020 and will take place each Tuesday from 3-6 p.m. through September. The market is held at the northwest corner of Hegeler Park. Vendors will include those selling produce, as well as crafts and other items. Social distancing will be practiced.

Mayor Grove said he has received some positive comments about our road projects. Mayor Grove said we wish we could do all roads curbs and alleys, however we do our best to prioritize those that need the most attention. He thanked City Engineer Brian Brown for his work on the projects. He added that he has noticed many yards that are being remediated by the EPA seems to be prompting residents to improve their landscaping which is great for the City.

**COMMENTS**

Leah Inman said she has received thanks and appreciation from several restaurant owners who used tables lent to them by the City for outdoor dining.

City Engineer Brown explained the work going on at Rotary Park relates to sewer main and water main installation to serve the future restroom/safe shelter. He stated that as soon as grant money is released, an architect will be hired to do design in hopes the structure can be erected this fall.

Mayor Grove also announced an additional roadway that is being added within Rotary Park to provide additional space for the Celebration of Lights displays.

Mayor Grove thanked the Ax Church for all of their efforts during Hope Week and announced that the church will be donating \$10,000 for the installation of an additional playground complex located near right field in the shade area.

Alderman Demes asked the press to remind residents that we are a “no burn” City other than recreational fires. He also stated that the City has a leash law and an ordinance

requiring residents to clean up after their dogs. Alderman Reynolds reminded residents that loose garbage is not allowed in cans. Garbage should be placed in bags.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS**

Moved by Alderman Ptak and seconded by Alderman Lavieri to accept, pay and place on file bills for June 29, 2020 with Total submitted of \$708,403.80 (Total Payroll \$189,391.05, Bills to be Paid \$189,399.43, Total Bills Paid \$349,613.32).

**ROLL CALL:** AYE: Alderman Demes, Bacidore, Ptak, Reynolds, Lavieri, Jeppson, Herndon, Crane

NAY: None Absent: None Abstain: None

**Motion Carried 8-0**

Moved by Alderman Reynolds and seconded by Alderman Crane to adjourn the meeting.  
Voice vote, all ayes. Motion is carried.

**ADJOURNED 7:21p.m.**



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Carrie Brown, City Clerk